



Hillcrest Newsletter

Spring 2023

Head Teacher's Update:

Dear Parents/Carers,

This term has flown by and we have had some wonderful learning and adventures together this term which you can read about.

It was lovely to see lots of parents face to face at our Parents Evening. This is something we missed during the pandemic and it is lovely to be able to put names to faces finally.

Whilst the pupils are off this does not mean Hillcrest will be empty as this is the time when school improvements can occur. This Easter we are having some painting done in the main corridor and our amazing caretaker, Mr Dobson, finally has time to do the jobs he is unable to complete when people are in the building.

A huge amount of gratitude to all of our staff who go above and beyond every day and also to our amazing young people who make Hillcrest a joyous place to be.

Thank you for your continued support this term. We really do value our partnership with parents and carers.

Mrs Mead

KS3- Class GM

Mayans, Incas and Aztecs

We had a fantastic term in Class GM learning all about the Mayans, Incas and Aztecs and learning about their food, particularly chocolate (the students really enjoyed the chocolate tasting session, but were undecided which they preferred; dark, milk or white, or perhaps all three!).



Cookery and PE

The students have enjoyed their cookery lessons, making a mixture of delicious savoury and sweet treats (Pizza pies were definitely a hit!) and in PE the students enjoyed playing Volleyball and practising their passing techniques during matches.

As always, the students have worked really hard and they should be very proud of their behaviour and academic attainment this term.

KS3 – Class EM

Class EM have had another really enjoyable term together!

English and Humanities

During Spring Term 1, in English we read 'Letters from the Lighthouse' as our class novel which we were really gripped by. This was a story about refugees during the Second World War and their fight to help save other refugees. This linked nicely with our Humanities topic of World War 2. We learned about the causes of WW2 and the effects that this had on the people of that time,

especially the children. We learned about Anne Frank and read extracts from her diary to find out more about how life was for her in hiding.

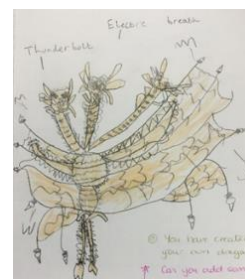
Anderson Shelters

We built Anderson Shelters in Design Technology using old boxes and junk modelling materials. We had to think carefully about the structure of our shelters and how we could attach the pieces together.



Vikings & How to Train Your Dragon

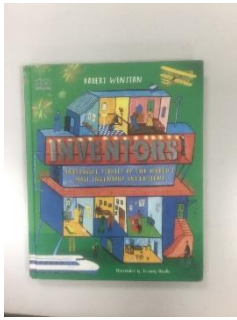
During Spring Term 2, we read 'How to Train your Dragon' and linked this to our Humanities topic on Vikings. In Design Technology, we designed and built our own Viking long boats and in English we created our own Dragons and wrote some amazing descriptions of their appearance and special features. In Maths, we really enjoyed playing 'The Pirate Game'. Our group have also been learning about the game 'Dungeons and Dragons' and have made their own characters and enjoyed role playing the game.



KS3- Class MS

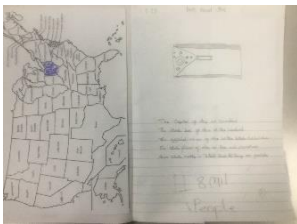
Inventors and Inventions

For our first Half Term topic we learnt all about different inventions and inventors. We made our own versions of Da Vinci's parachutes, designed medals for Marie Curie, discovered the first films ever made, as well as designing our own transport. There was also lots of amazing persuasive writing that went alongside these topics.



America

This half term, we have done lots of great work learning about America. There has been some fantastic Geography skills as well as independent research and studying to learn more about chosen places of interest. Additionally, Class MS have done so well with their reading for our class text 'The Accidental President' by Tom McLaughlin.



Amazing Progress-

This term has had a lot of challenging topics in Maths such as division, statistics and percentages to name a few. They have all persevered and made some amazing progress. As well as this, they have come so far with their Science and Cookery lessons by taking part, coping with transitions and making some lovely food and carrying out exciting experiments.

We hope everyone has a lovely Easter holiday and look forward to next term!

KS3- Class HS

Fundraising

Class HS have had a very successful term not only working hard but also fundraising. We ran a 'trial tuck shop' in preparation for raising money for Red Nose Day. The trial helped us work out which products were most popular and the money from this went towards our class fund for a McDonalds treat. The students then planned, organised and ran the Red Nose Day tuck shop raising £60 which was an excellent total. We reflected on the time and effort they put into the day. It is clear we have some natural sales personnel amongst the class!



Ancient Egyptians

We have also been enjoying learning about the ancient Egyptians and we made our own ancient artefacts. Students chose different moulds and then used their artistic skills to paint them and make them look ancient.



KS3- Class DM

Ancient Egypt & The UK

Class DM have had a very interesting spring term! We have looked at Ancient Egypt and The UK as our main topics and they have loved learning about these.

During our Ancient Egypt topic, the class made some incredible Egyptian nameplates and completed some thorough research on different Egyptian Pharaohs. We also loved the story 'There's a Pharaoh in my Bath!' by Jeremy Strong. We thought this book was hilarious and had lots of fun writing

our own versions. When learning about The UK, we looked at maps and the rivers and places in the UK. We made fantasy rice maps and had great fun tea staining them. Everyone was so brave at getting messy with this!



Finally, we have loved playing lots of group games together in the classroom and outside including, wink murder, charades, the parachute and more! Overall, this term has been great fun and we look forward to having more fun in the summer term.



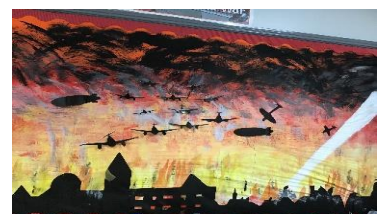
KS3- Class BL

Interesting Topics

Class BL have had a really settled and enjoyable Spring Term. We have been fully invested in our class texts and produced some wonderful writing from them. Our topics were very well received too.

World War 2

In the first half term, at the request of the students, we studied World War 2 and all that entailed. We explored so many aspects of the war, from rations to The Blitz, The Holocaust and air raids. We read a fabulous book called "Letters From the Lighthouse" that we really enjoyed and it helped us really understand not only about evacuation but also the Kindertransport. We made some brilliant Anderson Shelters in DT and the detail we included was amazing.



Making Great Progress

The second half term saw us throwing ourselves in our topic of "The Vikings" - we learned that we are so lucky to live where we do with our rich Viking history just on our doorstep. We read "How To Train Your Dragon" by Cressida Cowell and even learned how to speak dragonese (very funny!).

We designed and made our own dragons using clay and made a whole Viking longship from a milk bottle off all things. We can see and feel great progress across the board in class BL and we're looking forward to beginning our new topic in the Summer term.



KS4- Class MW

Resilience & Determination

Class MW have had an incredible Spring Term! The pupils have continued to show resilience and determination towards their exam papers and coursework which we are so proud of them for.

Northumbria Police & Crime Commission

We are also especially proud with the progress that they have all made within their sessions with the Northumbria Police and Crime Commission. We have tackled some thought-provoking topics such as: Banter vs Harassment, Hate Crime, Gambling and Online Communications. The engagement and quality of work they have produced in these sessions has come on leaps and bounds, and we cannot wait to showcase our final pieces after the Easter holidays.

Easter Fun Day

The students have ended the term by organising and running the Easter Fun Day in school. We ran a

tuckshop sale, an egg hunt, raffles and an egg decorating competition which was amazing!



We can't wait to come back after the holidays to smash the Summer Term!

KS4- Class SM

Working Hard

Class SM have worked incredibly hard this term. We have completed our first Science exam, 3 more maths exams and our speaking and listening exam. It's all GO! In DoFE we have been working on our independent skills, shopping, budgeting, cleaning and cooking. We are very excited to see all exams behind us and continue to work on our personal goals.



Local Police Work

We are also completing a programme with the local police on Community Safety and are really enjoying these insightful sessions. KS4 and 5 students now know what to do in some emergency situations!

KS4- Class CB

Dedication and Commitment

What a fantastic term it has been for Class CB! Our pupils have been working extremely hard towards their accreditations and we are so proud of them. As we enter the final stretch before finishing the assessments, I want to give our pupils a big round of applause for their dedication and commitment.

Learning Opportunities

We have also had some wonderful trips out in the community, including a visit to safety works. This was not only an enjoyable

experience but also a great learning opportunity where we were able to participate safely in realistic situations illustrating everyday hazards and how to prevent them.

Developing Skills & Knowledge

We had an amazing time at Northumberlandia during our hedge clearing event, and also had the opportunity to try out different bikes at the "Wheels for All" event. We have had a lot of fun and worked hard during these events, and it has been great to see our pupils enjoying themselves whilst learning.

We also had the pleasure of welcoming a kickboxing coach to our school this term, who taught our pupils valuable lessons about self-defense, self-esteem, and confidence. It was incredible to see how engaged our pupils were during these classes, and they learned so much from the coach's expertise. Through these lessons, our pupils were able to build their self-confidence and self-esteem, while also learning practical skills that can help them feel safer in their daily lives. We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work with such a talented coach, and we look forward to seeing how our pupils continue to grow and develop through their newfound skills and knowledge.



As we approach the Easter break, we would like to wish all of our pupils a wonderful time off. We hope you all have a chance to relax and recharge before coming back for what promises to be an exciting summer term. We can't wait to see what the next term has in store and we are looking forward to more learning opportunities and adventures with our amazing pupils.

KS4- Class DK (The Bridge)

Functional Skills

The Bridge class have been working very hard this spring term, not only in lessons but in functional skills. We have opened the bridge café, where each pupil has an individualised role.



We have visited local parks to play football and have many visitors to class from colleges to citizen's advice, police and the street doctors. We have planned trips out to Newcastle and have taken the bus with the lunches we have made.

KS3- Class SK

Lots of Learning

What a great term we have had in Class SK. We have continued to develop our knowledge of Maths and English and have enjoyed lots of practical Science lessons. Cookery lessons are always popular and the students have made some really ambitious (and delicious!) recipes.

We have enjoyed our class book of the Spiderwick Chronicles and we enjoy our David Walliams audio books.

Developing Our Skills & Outdoor Fun

We have worked really hard on developing social skills and our personal regulation skills and have made really good progress with both! We have also made good use of outdoor space; building tents, water play, sand and construction and even giant dominoes! We hope to make more use of our outdoor space as the weather improves so fingers crossed for some sunshine!



As always, thank you for all your support throughout the term. Have a very Happy Easter and a lovely holiday.

Science- Miss Bishop

Super Scientists

We have had another fantastic term in science! It has been an absolute pleasure teaching Key Stage 3 and seeing, first-hand, how much they've enjoyed the topics we have covered. They have fully embraced having Science as a separate lesson and have become very inquisitive and hands on with their learning. We have carried out some very interesting investigations over the half term and the students have shown how sensible they can be with all of the equipment we have used.



States Of Matter

This term we have learned about the different states of matter, and how solids, liquids and gases can change state when they are heated and cooled. We carried out an investigation using chocolate, where we heated it as a solid and watched it change state into liquid, the students really enjoyed this, especially as they got to eat some at the end! We also investigated states of matter with ice cubes and water, we cooled and boiled it as well as froze it in order to demonstrate how the state of matter can be changed from one to another. The students were super sensible when using the different pieces of equipment and listened carefully to instructions.



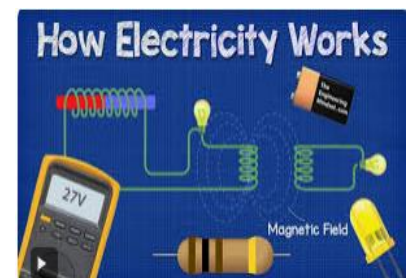
Water Worlds

We've also learned about the water cycle and created our very own mini water worlds where we grew cress in a self-contained pot in order to see the water cycle at work. We all really enjoyed seeing the cress grow on the classroom windowsill over a week or so.



Lots of Investigations...

So far this half term we have been looking at electricity, the students have been creating simple circuits independently and using different components, for example motors, buzzers, bulbs and switches. They thoroughly enjoyed investigating how they all worked. We have also been testing different materials to determine whether they are conductors or insulators.



Overall, it has been a great term and it's been lovely to see how engaged the students have been, lessons have been fun and the students are always asking questions and expressing an interest in the different topics.

School Improvements

We are currently creating a Thrive room for students, this will be an additional resourced space for students to work on their key strands from their profile. This should be up and running next term.

Thank you to Mr Dobson our Site Manager for always improving and maintaining our school.

Parents/carers in receipt of FSM vouchers

Please ensure this voucher is used for its intended purpose only. The voucher must not be sold, passed on or used for any other purpose. If you are not able to use it, or do not require the vouchers for food/clothing please contact the school and arrange for its return. Northumberland County Council reserves the right to carry out checks to ensure the vouchers are used for their intended purpose, and by accepting this voucher you agree to these checks being undertaken. If anyone is found to mis-use the voucher Northumberland County Council may take action to recover the money, in full, from you as well as taking any other action they deem appropriate.

Northumbria Police, Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

Once again this academic year we have worked with the VRU and had sessions delivered on:

- Knife Crime
- Malicious Communications
- Drugs and Alcohol (KS4/5 only)

As a school we work hard on educating our young people about how to stay safe online. The VRU **Malicious Communications** unit covered:

- considering the impact and consequences around sending and receiving messages, texts and posts on social media
- discussing how unkind, inappropriate or offensive messages can impact both the sender and the recipient
- informing students about the laws in relation to online behaviours and look at some real life examples of where these have been applied
- making pupils aware of the potential effect a criminal record can have on a person's life and future
- addresses the issue of sexting or intimate image

abuse, coercion of young people into the sending or distribution of nude or semi-nude photographs and the laws and potential repercussions of such activity

- information around what to do if a person becomes involved as an unwilling perpetrator or victim and the support available

Below is an example of the scenarios that were looked at.

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER | violence reduction unit
Improving lives to prevent crime

The legal bit

Malicious Communications Act 1988
It is an offence to send any form of communication to cause the person receiving it to feel upset, offended or anxious; includes threats and information which the sender knows is not true.

Communications Act 2003
It is an offence to use any digital device to send or post mean, upsetting, offensive or degrading words to someone.

Someone I know is sending me lots of text messages threatening to beat me up when they see me. I have asked them to leave me alone but they won't - I feel too scared to go out, I don't know what else to do.

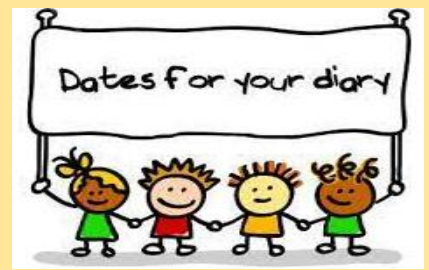
Computer Misuse Act 1990
It is an offence to hack into a person's online account, or personal device, to purposely use their information to do something to make that person feel upset, embarrassed, harassed or distressed.

Protection from Harassment Act 1997
It is an offence to carry out any act or behaviour that you know would make another person feel upset, harassed or distressed. S.4 covers threats and causing a person to feel in fear of violence (on more than 2 occasions).

It is vital we all work together to ensure no one has to endure malicious communications. You can do this by making sure you are vigilant with your child's online communications. We would really appreciate your support with this.

Happy Easter!

All students have been given a Cadburys Creme Egg as an Easter treat to enjoy!



- 31/03/2023 – School Closes (Easter)
- 17/04/2023- School Returns
- 01/05/2023- May Day
- 08/05/2023 – Coronation Bank Hol
- 26/05/2023- School Closes (Half Term)
- 05/06/2023- School Returns
- 21/07/2023- School Closes (Summer)
- 04/09/2023- School Returns



Please remember to update us here at school if you move house, change telephone/mobile phone number or email address so we can contact you.



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EASTER

WORD SEARCH



BUNNY
EGGS
CHICK
JELLYBEAN

BASKET
SPRING
FLOWER
EASTER

GRASS
CANDY
HUNT
DYE

BONNET
SUNDAY
PEEPS
LAMB



Candy consumption around the world during Easter



Uk
2.91 lbs



US
1.92 lbs



Russia
1.33 lbs



Canada
0.92 lbs



Mexico
0.50 lbs



S. Korea
0.34 lbs



Philippines
0.25 lbs